

Stock.

What Horses you Should Breed.

Whether you breed horses for your own use or for the market, or partly for both, there are some important points which you should now consider.

While recently in conversation with one of our distinguished horse breeders, in reply to one of our questions, he answered emphatically: "Farmers should breed the horses that bring the most money, shouldn't they?" At first our mind naturally gave tacit assent, but upon a moment's reflection we confess this was a "stunner." "During what boom?" we inquired. This was a stunner to our interviewer. We then pointed out the desirability of farmers always breeding the best horses which are best adapted to his conditions and circumstances, in which case they will always command ready sales at remunerative prices, and come in for their share of boom prices besides, when their time in the rotation arrives.

The points for you now to consider are (1) what these conditions are, and (2) what breeds are the best. Before doing so it will be necessary for you to review the causes of the decline, if not the fall, of some of the hitherto popular breeds, and the causes of the greater fitness of others to survive them. This question is better illustrated in cattle than in horses. When the boom starts, prices soon go up fabulously. The competition in the show ring becomes keen and the prizes offered are large. The stallions and mares are gorged for the purpose, like beef steers for a Christmas fat-stock show, in order to make them sleek, heavy, and sure for the prize. They are tenderly nursed and diligently drugged, and the innocent owners deem it a ruinous sacrifice to put such high-priced, aristocratic animals to honest employments; the prizes and awards must make amends for all the iniquities. The result is that both they and their offspring decline in constitutional vigor, fall off in stamina and become more or less sterile; the crash then comes, and there is a howl for mules. Action and stamina are wanted for legitimate purposes, and cannot be procured at any price.

We do not assert that the whole breed are thus immolated on the exhibition altar, and even if they were, should any educational advantages be gained, the sacrifice would not be so enormous, or the example so appalling. Judge A. insists that the big animal should have the prize, perhaps for reasons urged by Judge B.; Judge B., on the contrary, is in favor of the fat animal, possibly for reasons given by Judge A.; Judge C., as umpire, gives his decision on grounds unknown to himself or anybody else, and yet you are expected to learn a practical and profitable lesson from this advanced system of judging, especially when these decisions are reversed by other tribunals.

But only half the injury and injustice is usually perpetrated by the exhibitions. The owner, either by necessity or choice, must get quick returns from his large investment, and the plan he fixes for doing so is to breed too young and attempt too much. The young stallion is called upon to do double the service which nature intends. Just prior to the travelling season he is fattened and sleeked up on

fat-stock show principles, and in order to accomplish this, he must lack exercise. The customers having received an exhibition education, are taught to regard the show standard of fatness as emblematic of perfection. While all these historic events are taking place, those breeds which are earning honest money, are rapidly gaining what the boomed and doomed breeds are losing, a reaction takes place, and the life history of the busy-boom parasite is thus ended.

Apart from the trotter and the racer, in the breeding of which you have no business to dabble, there is one of three classes of horses which you can raise with certainty of success. The first principle to be settled is this, that you must breed a class horses which will be the most profitable for your farm work, and sold a few years after they are broken in. If your land is a heavy clay, and especially if you have not much light teaming to do, your forte should be the breeding of heavy drafts, and for this purpose you will require a stallion weighing not less than 1,650 pounds, and between 16 and 17 hands high, for your mares not very much lighter in weight—not less than 1,200 pounds. These are the weights when the animals are in good breeding condition, not fitted up for a fat stock show. See that the stallion is regularly fed and exercised all the year round, and not specially prepared for the service season.

The "general purpose" cow is a myth; but to make the same accusation against the horse of this description would not be fair without some reservation. What you need in the former is an extreme quantity of beef, butter or milk, not a medium of all three; but in the latter case, you have no work suitable for a span of elephants, neither have you ample occasion to trot to town at Maud S. speed. Hence the value of a compromise. The greater part of your work is in the field, and if your soil is light, you need a span that have some snap. Such a team will trot to the market and back with two light loads while the drafts are making only one trip with double the load. There are two types of this class, one in which the draft predominates, and the other possessing the chief attribute of the trotter, both usually having more stamina and endurance than the draft, for the reason that rational feeding and exercise are indispensable to action as well as to hardiness and all the other desirable qualities that the horse is heir to. In these classes you will have much more difficulty in fixing a type in your mind's eye, at which you should certainly strive in all your breeding operations, and if the exhibition has aided you in fixing upon a desirable type, give it credit, therefor, by all means, and consider that your time has not been ill-spent. For such a general purpose horse or roadster you will require a stallion not lighter than 1,250 pounds, standing 15.3 to 16 hands high, crossed upon your heavier mares.

There are good reason why the character of your farm and the other conditions mentioned, should decide the line of breeding into which you should enter, for then you will be more likely to double the profits of those breeders who make a specialty of breeding in competition with you. The constitution of your animals can always be kept in a vigorous state, and will therefore be in more active demand.

There are two things that should never be confounded, viz., weight with size, and size or weight with strength. Weight and size are mostly dependent upon fatness, while strength is associated with muscular development, and strength, action, and endurance are largely connected with form and conformation.

Skim vs. Buttermilk for Hogs.

The value of skim-milk and buttermilk as food for pigs was carefully tested last summer at the Mass. Experiment Station. The skim-milk was estimated at 20 cents per hundred pounds, and the buttermilk, which was procured from a creamery, at 13.7 cents per hundred pounds. Corn meal was bought at \$28 per ton. Six Berkshire pigs, from 40 to 50 pounds each, were used for the experiment. Three of them were fed together with corn meal and skim-milk, and the other three were fed with corn meal and buttermilk, all they would eat in each case. In the first lot 713½ pounds corn meal and 982 gallons of skim milk made 617½ pounds gain live weight; dressed weight gained during the experiment 510 pounds. In the second lot 717½ pounds of corn meal and 995 gallons of buttermilk produced a gain in live weight of 619 pounds and of dressed weight 514.4 pounds. In the first lot the cost of feed to produce a pound of dressed pork 5.8 cents; with the second lot 4.6 cents. The difference in cost is approximately equal to the difference on the cost of the buttermilk and skim milk, thus showing them to be of about equal value as food for pigs.

Breed up the Native Best.

A "Live Stockman" writing to the N. Y. Tribune, gives the following hint to farmers, which comes to them very seasonably:—"I haven't the firm faith commonly held in the potency of blue blood; it is one of the humbugs of the day, created and fostered by interested breeders of pure stock to lift their own kinds into undue prominence. There is a very great uncertainty in breeding any kind of stock. The constant falling out of sight of one noted family of Jerseys after another proves it. Who hears now of the Rex family, which may be taken as a type of scores? Farmers' Glory, the noted bull which cost several thousand dollars, because of the assumed certainty of his blood, was finally sold for \$140, as a thorough failure.

"And so it is, has been, and will be, all through the history of all the pure breeds. I know of many instances of farmers rearing the calves of their best cows and in a short time doubling the value of their herds. The Soles herd, well known to be a success in this way, and that of Mr. Cheever are instances of this. No; there is no more uncertainty in breeding from the best of our native stock than there is among Jerseys, Aryshires, Devons or Short-horns. Breed from the best; feed well from the first; train to milking habits; and keep on doing this, and we shall soon make our natives quite equal to the much puffed pure breeds, which have been built up in this very same way from no better material."

Prof. Roberts estimates that average straw is worth \$3.50 per ton as manure.